Unit 23: Complementary Therapies for Health and Social Care

Delivery guidance

This unit gives learners an understanding of complementary therapies and how they underpin the maintenance of health and wellbeing of service users in the health and social care sector. Learners will examine and consider how these therapies may be regulated alongside conventional medical practice and the different perspectives and conflicts associated with both in practice. In exploring this practice, learners will evaluate and justify the effectiveness of complementary therapies in support of the service user within the health and social care sector.

Approaching the unit

Learners are expected to develop the academic skills associated with research while gaining an understanding of the use of complementary practices and key terms involved in the intervention support of service user needs within the health and social care sectors.

Complementary therapy, particularly as an internally assessed unit, lends itself to active participation. Learners will be able to apply their knowledge of the practice of complementary therapy to case studies across the learning aims.

Delivering the learning aims

Learning aim A is primarily concerned with the underpinning of the benefits of complementary therapy in support of health and wellbeing of service users. With the appropriate tutor support, learners should undertake research on the classifications of complementary therapies (e.g. physical, sensory, creative and expressive). The broad approach to research should give learners the appropriate skills and knowledge required when making decisions for its application. Learners therefore should be given the opportunity to choose two different complementary therapies appropriate for service users and their needs. They should assess the use of these therapies and justify their contribution in support of maintaining the health and wellbeing of the service user. For learners to articulate arguments professionally with the use of detailed analysis and research, additional tutor support in understanding key terms used in the unit through worksheets would be of benefit. Learners may also draw on researched information to create a detailed spidergram showing the range of complementary therapies available through health and social care services in support of their discussions with peers and tutors.

Learning aims B and C

The learning aims will give learners the chance to apply their understanding and knowledge of the practice of complementary therapy intervention tailored to the needs of their case studies and/or service users. Learners should be encouraged to draw on their key skills and knowledge developed and apply detailed analysis to reach justified decisions with professional articulated arguments in support of the tailored complementary therapy for use. Tutors are encouraged to discuss with learners the implication of the lack of scientific evidence to support complementary therapies and this could be developed using group work and case studies. Learners therefore could be given different novel case studies to initiate discussions with peers and groups in relation to the complementary therapy, conventional medical practice and the implication of scientific evidence and best practice. In addition, tutors could invite professional guest speakers/visiting practitioners and users of complementary therapies. Learners can draw on anecdotal evidence to evaluate how effective complementary therapies have been in the treatment of individuals. Moreover, accessing the NICE website to review the outcomes of research trials into complementary therapies might support learners' evaluation of the therapies' effectiveness.

It is important to note that tutors should give learners an understanding of the ethical obligations regarding confidentiality required throughout the unit.

The unit may highlight some sensitive topics and therefore learners should be given an opportunity at the beginning of the unit (and subsequently) to raise any concerns. Additional support and signposting can be offered.

Assessment model

Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
A Investigate the potential benefits of complementary therapies in maintaining health and wellbeing	**A1** Types of complementary therapies **A2** Role of complementary therapies **A3** Benefits of complementary therapies	A report on complementary therapies and their benefits.
B Examine the provision of complementary therapies in relation to conventional medical treatments	**B1** Provision of complementary therapies **B2** Provision in relation to conventional medical treatment	
C Investigate the factors to be considered when providing complementary therapies alongside conventional medical treatments	**C1** Role of professional bodies and regulation **C2** Factors to be considered when providing complementary therapies	A report on the provision and role of complementary therapies.

Assessment guidance

This unit is internally assessed. There is a maximum number of two summative assignments for this unit. Tutors should refer to the assessment guidance in the specification for specific detail, particularly in relation to the requirements for Pass, Merit and Distinction grades.

It is suggested that **learning aim A** is assessed via a written report. Within this report, learners must address the underpinning of the various complementary therapies in terms of their content, regulations, comparative practice, approach and application. They will also need to establish the benefits in maintaining health and wellbeing for the service user.

Learning aims B and C require learners to demonstrate their understanding by selecting two complementary therapies for service users/case studies in health and social care settings. Learners should highlight their understanding of how these treatments and interventions are to be applied and what, if any, support they can give the service user/case study. They should provide evidence of the role of professional bodies and regulation being discussed, with the different factors associated with complementary and conventional medical treatments. An evaluation of the different provisions is to be noted, with an emphasis on the role of complementary therapy as a service within the health and social care sector.

Getting started

This gives you a starting place for one way of delivering the unit, based around the recommended assessment approach in the specification.

Introduction

Introduce this unit by asking learners to map out their understanding and preconceived ideas in relation to complementary therapy and conventional medical practice and the types of care available to service users in the health and social care sector. This could be undertaken as a reflective exercise, making good use of the specification unit and the varied complementary therapies for use. The tutor could encourage learners to share their knowledge and understanding of the complementary therapies, regulations and treatments with their peers. This will be helpful for learners to express and gather the knowledge of others for its application.

Learning aim A: Investigate the potential benefits of complementary therapies in maintaining health and wellbeing

Learners must gather an understanding of the varied complementary therapies.

- For A1:
- manipulative techniques
- touch and massage techniques
- natural remedies
- holistic therapies
- specific therapies.

Learners should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the role of complementary intervention available alongside conventional medicine within the health and social care sector.

- For A2:
  - diagnostic
  - therapeutic
  - provision alongside orthodox treatment.

Learners should be able to understand the different contributions in terms of the benefits of practice.

- For A3:
  - energy and wellbeing
  - balance of mind, body and spirit

- pain management
- boost immune system and promote healing
- decrease stress and help relaxation
- anxiety, depression, addiction and phobia support
- improved circulation and digestion
- relief of side effects of chemotherapy.

Learning aim B: Examine the provision of complementary therapies in relation to conventional medical treatments

Learners should be able to differentiate the difference between available provisions of complementary and traditional medicine treatments.

- For B1:
  - private and local provisions
  - access and referral systems
  - choice for service users within health and social care sector
  - factors and impacts of provision available.

Learners should be able to highlight the different contributions in relation to traditional medical treatment for different disorders.

- For B2:
  - musculoskeletal disorders
  - metabolic disorders
  - cardiorespiratory disorders
  - psychological disorders.

Learning aim C: Investigate the factors to be considered when providing complementary therapies alongside conventional medical treatments

Learners should be able to consider the various factors involved when providing complementary therapies.

- For C1:
  - International Guild of Complementary Therapists
  - International Practitioners of Holistic Medicine (IPHM)
  - Regulation – professional training – legislation and ethical practice.

Learners should be able to consider the implications of practice and evidence-based research.

- For C2:
  - research-based evidence

- advantages and disadvantages of complementary therapy
- contraindications for the use
- controversial issues, health and safety and unregistered practitioners.

Details of links to other BTEC units and qualifications, and to other relevant units/qualifications

This unit links to:

- Unit 2: Anatomy and Physiology for Health and Social Care
- Unit 5: Principles of Safe Practice in Health and Social Care
- Unit 12: Physiological Disorders and their Care.

Resources

Textbooks

Charles, V and Furnham, A – *Complementary Medicine: A Research Perspective* (Wiley-Blackwell, 1997)

Goldberg, L – *Massage and Aromatherapy, A Practical Approach* (Nelson Thornes, 2001) ISBN 9780748770724

Gould, F – *Anatomy and Physiology for Holistic Therapies* (Nelson Thornes 2001) ISBN 9780748758425

Pitman, V and Mackenzie, K – *Reflexology, A Practical Approach.* Second Edition (Heinemann, 2002) ISBN 978074875677

Journals

Care and Health Magazine
Community Care Magazine
Complementary Therapies in Nursing and Midwifery
The International Journal of Aromatherapy

Websites

www.aromatherapy-uk.org

Aromatherapy Organisations Council

www.bcma.co.uk

British Complementary Medicine Association

www.britreflex.co.uk
British Reflexology Association

www.nice.org.uk
Complementary therapies/information for the public

www.grcct.org
The General Regulatory Council for Complementary Therapies

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